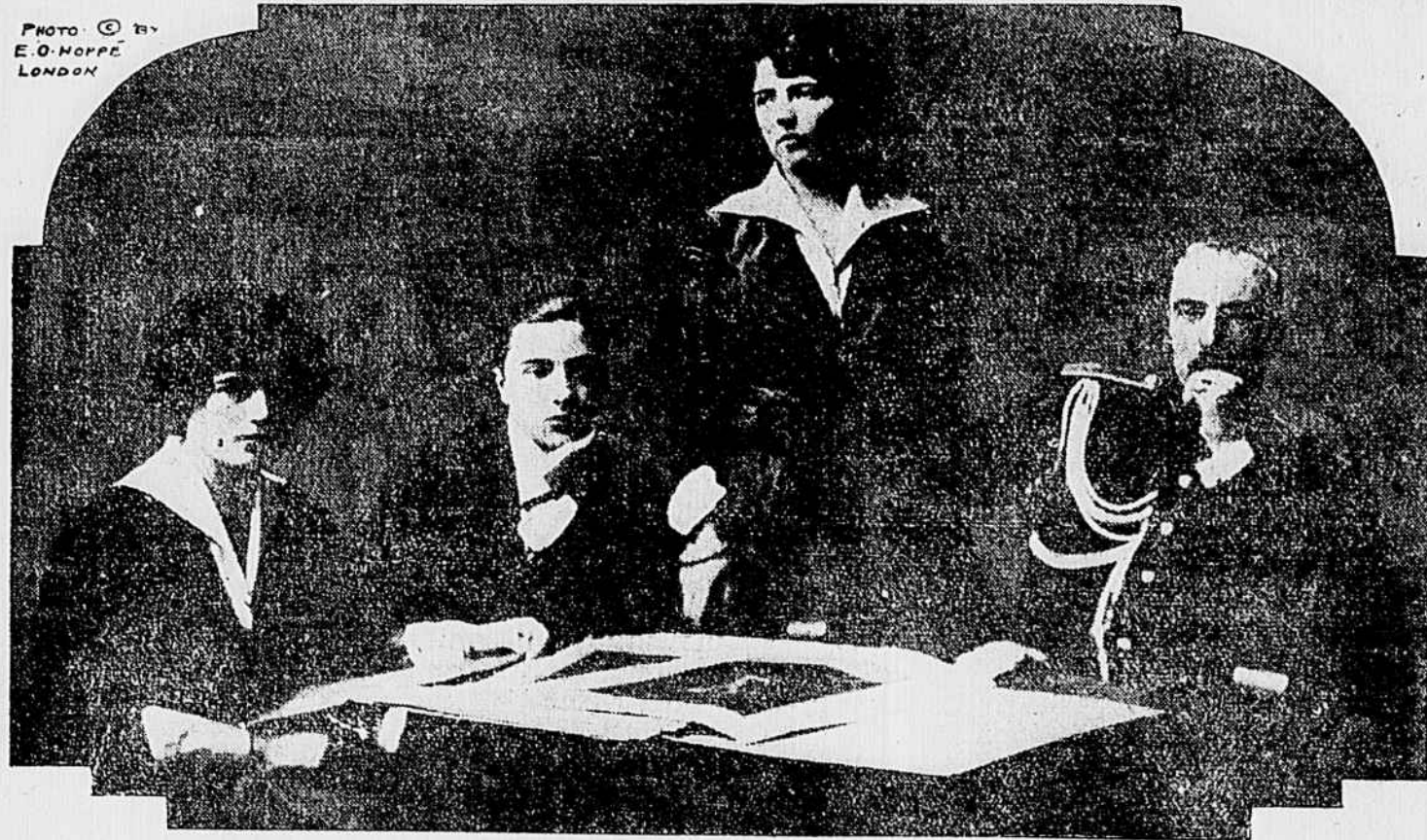


The Black Shadow over the Romance of Grand Duke Michael's Daughter

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The Grand-Duke Michael and His Children. The Seated Figure Is the Countess Nada Torby.

Hereditary Romantic Tendencies That Have Shown Themselves in Europe's Most Interesting Love Match---Science Watching for More Tendencies from the Congo Slave Who Was One of the Noble Beauty's Ancestors

THAT the romantic temperament descends from parents to children is shown very strongly by the engagement of the beautiful young Countess Nada Torby, daughter of the Grand Duke Michael of Russia, and Prince George of Battenberg.

Both are descended from ancestors who have again and again defied the rules and conventions of the royal caste. Their own engagement has been a pure love affair of the most romantic kind from first to last.

But in this romance there is also an element of the bizarre and extraordinary that makes it different from anything that has happened in European royalty. The bride has a strong strain of African blood mixed with that of the Czar of All the Russias. She is a direct descendant of Peter the Great's black slave Hannibal. Her descent is suggested in the remarkable blackness of her hair and her heavily-lidded dark eyes.

This descent casts a certain shadow over the union, which is otherwise regarded as the most popular and interesting in cosmopolitan high society. Scientists will watch its results with interest.

While the negro blood in the pedigree of the Countess dates back over two centuries, the possibility that it may reappear at any time in her offspring is admitted in scientific circles. Congenital characteristics frequently skip a generation or two, only to appear more emphatically lower down in the line. As a matter of fact, it is seldom that a hereditary characteristic is present in each generation, nature's general practice being rather to produce it in alternate generations, and in this way the characteristic may persist for centuries.

It is a well-known fact that the protruding lower jaw which has been a facial characteristic of the Hapsburgs for centuries failed to appear for several successive generations, but when it reappeared ultimately it was more pronounced than ever. The present King Alfonso of Spain is a marked example of the Hapsburg family idiosyncrasy.

While it has been argued that a child with negro blood in its veins can never be darker than the total negro characteristics of its immediate parents, there have been cases which would seem to cast a doubt on the universal application of this theory. Indeed, a very interesting play "The Pride of Race" was founded upon this very intricate point, and has created considerable discussion in scientific circles.

The little Countess's father, the Grand Duke Michael, cousin of the Czar of Russia, married his wife, Countess Sophie Torby, in express defiance of the orders of the late Czar Alexander III., a most rigorous autocrat. Because he insisted on marrying the girl of his choice he was deprived of all his honors, military rank and half his vast property, and banished from Russia.

His own father, the late Grand Duke Michael, denounced him and cut him off for a time. Then, when he married in spite of all of them, the imperial family tried to induce him to abandon his wife by offering to restore his income and honors in Russia if he would

do so. Every attempt was in vain. He was true to love.

The Countess Torby herself was of extraordinarily romantic descent. Her father was Prince Nicholas of Nassau, who, in his day, defied royal authority by contracting a morganatic marriage with the daughter of the great Russian poet Pushkin, who was himself a grandson of Peter the Great's black slave Hannibal.

Merely to outline the inherited strain of romance involved in the newly announced engagement, it may be stated that Prince George of Battenberg is the son of Prince Louis of Battenberg, whose grandfather, Prince Alexander of Hesse, member of an important reigning family, contracted a morganatic marriage with a non-royal woman. The Battenbergs, although they enjoy the title of "Prince," have no standing among royalties at the various German courts. In spite of this, Prince Louis married his cousin, the Princess Victoria of Hesse, sister of the Czarina of Russia. The Princess by this marriage lost her status as a member of a reigning family.

It is evident that the Battenbergs possess a most attractive personality, quite exceptional among royalties and this is clearly traceable to the non-royal woman, of great beauty, charm and magnificent physique, Prince Alexander of Hesse married in a past generation. Prince Louis showed his natural gifts, not only by winning his royal wife, but by rising to the highest position in the British navy in spite of a strong prejudice against a person of German descent. The only factor in favor of the Battenbergs in England was old Queen Victoria's friendship.

Prince Louis's brother, Prince Henry of Battenberg, married Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, Princess Beatrice, and this was certainly a love match. Prince Henry was the object of so much dislike and criticism in English society that in order to escape it he hastened off on an obscure military expedition in Africa and lost his life. The Battenberg qualities were displayed in another way when this Prince Henry's daughter, Princess Victoria, was chosen, because of her vigorous physique, as the most likely person to furnish a sound progeny to the throne of Spain.

Congo Slave Who Was One of the Noble Beauty's Ancestors



PHOTO WHITE STUDIO, N.Y.

A Striking Scene from "The Pride of Race"—a Play Recently Given in Which the Same Shadow That Hangs Over the Beautiful Countess Fell Upon the Unhappy Wife.

Coming engaged to the young Countess Torby he has really thrown away his chances. The present Czar, though not so bitter against his cousin as his father was, refuses to accord his family any position at court.

It is only necessary to look at the Countess Nada Torby to understand that Prince George wanted her for herself alone. She is a beauty of the most entrancing type. She has large, dark eyes, shaded by long lashes. A sensitive and delicately moulded face, a very winning expression and a mass of black hair. With all her charms she is simple and unaffected. The Grand Duke has lived with his family for many years at an English estate called Keble Hall, and he and his children have mingled freely among the people of the neighborhood. The Grand Duke is a member of the Local Board of Education. He is known to many Americans, with whom he has played golf in a perfectly democratic way at Cannes.



Prince George of Battenberg Who Will Wed Countess Torby.

Prince George of Battenberg, who is now a junior officer in the British navy, without fortune, might have aspired to regain some of the position in the royal hierarchy his family had lost, but in his



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The Beautiful Countess Nada Torby—Daughter of the Grand Duke Michael of Russia and Descendant of Hannibal, Peter the Great's Black Slave.

The spirit of romance began to fashion young Countess Torby's nature centuries ago. The Czar Peter the Great received from the Sultan of Turkey a magnificent negro slave, the famous Hannibal, gifted with such extraordinary intelligence that his energetic Czar, who cared nothing about a man or a woman's birth, promoted Hannibal until he became a General in the Russian army. It was not such an unusual thing for Peter to do. His Czarina, who reigned after his death and who is an ancestress of all succeeding Czar, was also presented to him as a gift from an appreciative friend, and she was his "handmaid" for many years before she was his wife and was crowned as Czarina.

Hannibal was ennobled; he died rich and renowned, and among his descendants in Russia was the greatest poet of the Muscovites, Pushkin, whose monument in Petrograd is as prominent as that of any Czar. The poet's daughter was one of the loveliest women in the empire, and when she was in her teens she was married, under the sponsorship of Alexander II., to a distinguished man of the court. But she was not contented with any ordinary mating. Her own mother had had a desperate love affair with a gentleman not her husband, which had cost Russia the life of its poet. Pushkin had been killed in a duel with his own brother-in-law on account of Mme. Pushkin's breaking away from the conventional matrimonial restrictions. Her daughter did the same, and eloped with Prince Nicholas of Nassau, younger brother of the Grand Duke of Luxem-

bourg. They went to the Riviera to live and two children were born to them, a son and a daughter, before the Czar would allow Pushkin's daughter a divorce from her Russian husband so that her princely lover could marry her.

Prince Nicholas was royal, his wife was not. There could then be only a morganatic alliance. The wife was created Countess of Merenberg by her brother-in-law, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, and when her children grew up they had all the advantages of wealth and position. The daughter inherited the wonderful good looks of her mother, and when the Grand Duke Michael Michailovich, grandson of Czar Nicholas I., saw her on the Riviera, he was determined to marry her, whatever the cost.

He did so, at the cost of incurring the anger of Alexander III. and Nicholas II., who successively forbade him ever to set foot again in Russia.

The Grand Duke Michael is incurably romantic. Not content with defying the Czar of Russia for the sake of love, he has recently written a novel in English called "Never Say Die," in which he relates the adventures of a young prince who finds himself in conflict with royal marriage conventions. The hero of the story is described as a German prince, but it is evident that his adventures are suggested by those of the Grand Duke himself.

It is said that the present Czar was more offended by this book than by the Grand Duke's marriage, which occurred before Nicholas ascended the throne.

It thus seems that hereditary tendencies in both the Countess Nada and Prince George of Battenberg combine to make them disregard conventions and make them obey their natural emotional impulses.

A human organism which responds strongly to the call of love and thrusts aside artificial and despotic restrictions is of the highest value to the race. Many scientific eugenicists have become convinced that we shall attain eugenic ideals better by encouraging such types than by attempting to control marriage scientifically.

But will the African strain mar this mingling of fine Caucasian types?